

WRITING RUBRICS

SIXTH GRADE USER MANUAL



**BASED ON THE
CALIFORNIA STATE WRITING STANDARDS**

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SECTION 1



STUDENT RUBRICS

SIXTH GRADE **WRITING STANDARDS**



IDEAS & CONTENT

- Writing is clear, coherent, and focused.
- Writing shows awareness of audience.
- Lead is attention-grabbing and states the purpose for writing with sophistication.
- Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- Conclusion includes personal summary, reaction, or understanding.

ORGANIZATION

- Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper.
- Writing clearly progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.

VOICE

- Distinctive style.
- Reader “hears” author speaking.
- Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.

SENTENCE FLUENCY

- Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures.
- Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.

WORD CHOICE

- Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly.
- No “dead” words used.
- Word choice shows awareness of audience.

CONVENTIONS

- Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly.
- Punctuation of sentences is correct.
- All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized.
- Spelling is correct throughout paper.

PRESENTATION

- Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean.
- Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings.
- Illustrations are carefully drawn.
- All guidelines followed.

“All great achievements require time.”

Maya Angelou

“My aim is to put down on paper what I see and what I feel in the best and simplest way.”

Ernest Hemingway

IDEAS & CONTENT

ADVANCED (4)

- Writing is clear, coherent, and focused.
- Writing shows awareness of audience.
- Lead is attention-grabbing and states the purpose for writing with sophistication.
- Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- Conclusion includes personal summary, reaction, or understanding.

PROFICIENT (3)

- Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience.
- Lead is somewhat attention grabbing; purpose is clear.
- Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- Fails to conclude with personal summary or understanding.

BASIC (2)

- Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience.
- Opening is dull.
- Main ideas are not well supported.
- Conclusion includes only very general summary/observation.

BELOW BASIC (1)

- Writing is somewhat incoherent, and unfocused; no awareness of audience.
- Main ideas are unsupported.
- No summary or understanding.

ORGANIZATION

ADVANCED (4)

- Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout the paper.
- Writing clearly progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.

PROFICIENT (3)

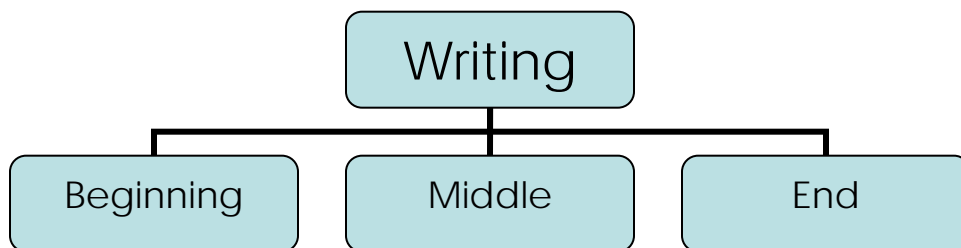
- Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently.
- Writing progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.

BASIC (2)

- Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear beginning, middle, and ending.

BELOW BASIC (1)

- Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern.



VOICE

ADVANCED (4)

- Distinctive style.
- Reader “hears” author speaking.
- Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.

PROFICIENT (3)

- Some glimpses of a distinctive style.
- Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.

BASIC (2)

- Not much personal style.
- Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.

BELOW BASIC (1)

- Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.

“We are cups, constantly and quietly being filled. The trick is, knowing how to tip ourselves over and let the beautiful stuff out.”

R. Bradbury

SENTENCE FLUENCY

ADVANCED (4)

- Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures.
- Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.

PROFICIENT (3)

- Writing mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures.
- Sentences are used mostly correctly.

BASIC (2)

- Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.

BELOW BASIC (1)

- Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.

“We live at the level of our language. Whatever we can articulate, we can imagine or explain.”

Ellen Gilcrist

WORD CHOICE

ADVANCED (4)

- Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly.
- No “dead” words used.
- Word choice shows awareness of audience.

PROFICIENT (3)

- Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words.
- Limited use of “dead” words.
- Word choice shows some awareness of audience.

BASIC (2)

- Author tends to choose general rather than precise words.
- Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used.
- Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.

BELOW BASIC (1)

- Author has difficulty choosing the proper word.
- Full of “dead” words.
- No awareness of audience.

*“Beauty of style, harmony, grace, and good rhythm
depend on Simplicity.”*

Plato

CONVENTIONS

ADVANCED (4)

- Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly.
- Punctuation of sentences is correct.
- All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized.
- Spelling is correct throughout paper.

PROFICIENT (3)

- Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

BASIC (2)

- Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

BELOW BASIC (1)

- Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

? , : . !

*“Good, better, best. Never let it rest, until your good is
better and your better is best!”*

Unknown

PRESENTATION

ADVANCED (4)

- Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean.
- Margins are straight.
- Special care has been taken with titles and headings.
- Illustrations are carefully drawn.
- All guidelines are followed.

PROFICIENT (3)

- Neatly and carefully written.
- Straight margins.
- Unwrinkled paper.
- Most guidelines followed.

BASIC (2)

- Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors.
- Some guidelines followed.

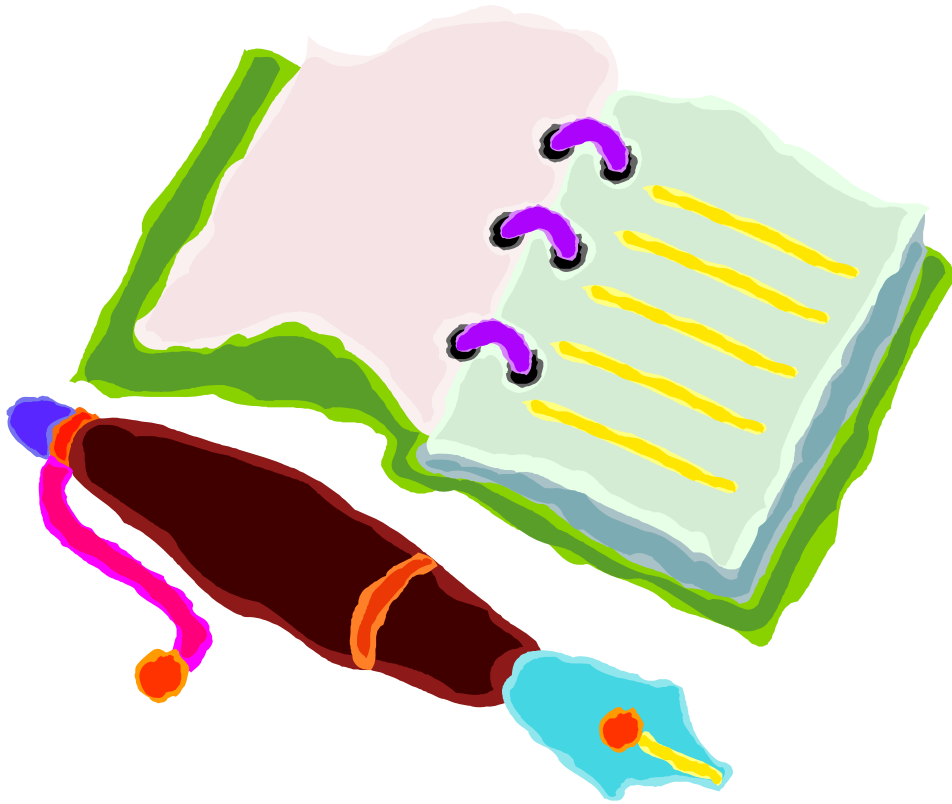
BELOW BASIC (1)

- Paper is so wrinkled and messy that the reader does not want to touch it.
- Guidelines not followed.

“It is not sufficient to see and to know the beauty of a work. We must feel and be affected by it.”

Voltaire

SECTION 2



TEACHER RUBRICS

Sixth Grade Standards Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. Lead is attention-grabbing and states the purpose for writing with <u>sophistication</u> . Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; conclusion includes personal summary, reaction, or understanding.	4	Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines followed.	4
Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience. Lead is somewhat attention grabbing; purpose is clear. Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; fails to conclude with personal summary or understanding.	3	Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines followed.	3
Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Main ideas are not well supported; Conclusion includes only very general summary/observation.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear beginning, middle, and ending.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines followed.	2
Writing is somewhat incoherent, and unfocused; no awareness of audience. Main ideas are unsupported. No summary or understanding.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.	1

Sixth Grade Standards Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Sentences are used mostly correctly.	3	Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.	2	Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.	1	Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

Narrative Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. Lead is attention-grabbing. Setting, plot, and characters are described by relevant facts, details, and explanations; Ending includes personal summary, reaction, or understanding.	4	Extremely well-organized. Includes a well-developed yet focused plot. Suspense builds throughout the story. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines followed.	4
Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience. Lead is somewhat attention grabbing; setting, plot, and characters are mostly described by relevant facts, details, and explanations; fails to conclude with personal summary or understanding.	3	Well-organized; Includes a clear plot. Writing progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending. Suspense is included.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines followed.	3
Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused. Opening is dull. Setting, plot, and characters are not well described; Ending includes only very general summary/observation.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear beginning, middle, and ending. Some suspense, but does not keep reader interest. Attempts a plot, but it is unclear or unfocused.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines followed.	2
Writing is somewhat, incoherent, and unfocused; little to no description of setting, plot, or characters. Main ideas are unsupported. No summary or understanding.	1	Writing is disorganized; little pattern. Little suspense. No plot development.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.	1

Narrative Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Dialogue supports and explains action. Dialogue is mixed with narration. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. All dialogue is punctuated correctly.	4	Point of view is unique and clear. Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience. Realistic and specific language help to bring the characters and plot to life.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Dialogue usually supports and explains action. Dialogue is sometimes mixed with narration. Sentences are used mostly correctly.	3	Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Most dialogue is punctuated correctly.	3	Point of view is clear. Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience. Realistic and specific language generally describes characters and plot.	3
Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly. Some dialogue used, but it is random; doesn’t fit with story. Imbalance of dialogue and narration.	2	Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Dialogue is unclear due to some improper punctuation.	2	Point of view is somewhat unclear. Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience. Some, but not much realistic or specific language is used.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences. Dialogue is completely random. There is little variety of dialogue/ narration.	1	Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Dialogue is not punctuated correctly.	1	Pont of view is unclear and inconsistent. Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience. Little realistic of specific language.	1

Expository Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. Thesis is attention-grabbing and states the purpose for writing with <u>sophistication</u> --clearly and thoroughly. Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and clear, thorough explanations; demonstrating deep understanding.	4	Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines are followed.	4
Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience. Thesis is somewhat attention grabbing; purpose is clear. Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; demonstrating a general understanding.	3	Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines are followed.	3
Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Thesis and purpose are not clear; Explanation is not clear or thorough and demonstrating limited understanding.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines are followed.	2
Writing is somewhat, incoherent, and unfocused; no awareness of audience. No clear thesis or purpose. Main ideas are unsupported. Little or no explanation is provided, demonstrates limited or no understanding.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.	1

Expository Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Sentences are used mostly correctly.	3	Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.	2	Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.	1	Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

Research Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writer chose a specific (focused) question that is covered <u>thoroughly</u> . Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. Lead is attention- grabbing and states the purpose for writing with <u>sophistication</u> . Author shows reader why finding answer to question is important. Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, data, details, and explanations from <u>multiple sources</u> . Includes both <u>primary</u> and <u>secondary</u> sources, demonstrating deep understanding. All writing, except quotations, is in your own words.	4	Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion. A thorough bibliography, using the correct format, is included.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All data, surveys, charts, and graphs are labeled and neatly shown. All guidelines followed.	4
Writer chose a specific (thorough) question that is covered well. Writing is clear, usually focused and shows awareness of audience. Lead is somewhat attention- grabbing: purpose is clear. Author explains why they want to find the answer to their question. Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, data, details, and explanations. Includes both <u>primary</u> and <u>secondary</u> sources, demonstrating a general understanding. All writing, except quotations, is in your own words.	3	Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion. A bibliography, using the correct format, is included.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most data, surveys, charts, and graphs are labeled and neat. Most guidelines followed.	3
Writer chose an unfocused question. Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Main ideas are not well-supported. May not include a primary source, demonstrating a limited understanding. All writing is in your own words, except quotations.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion. Bibliography is incorrectly formatted.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Data, surveys, charts, and graphs are labeled and somewhat neat. Some guidelines followed.	2
Writer chose an unfocused/unclear question. Writing is somewhat incoherent and unfocused, no awareness of audience. Main ideas are unsupported. No summary or understanding. Some information seems plagiarized! No quotations used.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern. Bibliography is missing.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Data, surveys, charts, and graphs are not labeled and may be messy. Guidelines not followed.	1

Research Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations are used correctly.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Sentences are used mostly correctly.	3	Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Quotations are mostly used correctly.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.	2	Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some difficulty punctuating quotations.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.	1	Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Poor punctuation of quotations.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

Response to Literature

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Goes beyond summarization of text to clear, coherent, and focused interpretation of character, setting, plot, literary devices, and/or theme. Shows awareness of audience—summarizes and explains concisely. Lead is attention-grabbing and states a <u>sophisticated</u> thesis. Main ideas are supported by relevant examples and quotes from the text; conclusion shows careful reading, understanding, and personal insight.	4	Extremely well-organized, with each body paragraph supporting the thesis statement in a different way. Each paragraph builds on the previous one. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, body, and conclusion.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines followed.	4
Sometimes goes beyond summarization of text. Interpretation is clear and usually focused. Shows awareness of audience—summarizes and explains. Lead is somewhat attention-grabbing and states a thesis. Main ideas are mostly supported by examples and quotes from the text; conclusion shows understanding of some big ideas in the literature.	3	Well-organized; body paragraphs mostly support the thesis in different ways. Most paragraphs build on each other. Writing progresses through an introduction, body, and conclusion.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines followed.	3
Mostly a summarization of text. Interpretation is somewhat unclear and/or lacks focus. Shows some awareness of audience—mostly summarizes and explains when necessary. Lead is dull and may not state a thesis. Main ideas are not supported by the chosen examples/quotes from the text; conclusion shows limited understanding of big ideas in the literature.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. Some body paragraphs are not clearly connected to the thesis statement.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines followed.	2
Only a summarization of text. Incoherent and unfocused. Shows no awareness of audience, —does not summarize or explain effectively. Lead is dull and does not state a thesis. Main ideas are not supported; conclusion shows no understanding of big ideas in the literature.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern. Body paragraphs do not support the thesis statement.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.	1

Response to Literature

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations are properly punctuated.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Uses formal language throughout, and does not “talk to” the reader. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Sentences are used mostly correctly.	3	Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Most quotations are properly punctuated.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Uses formal language and rarely “talks to” the reader. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.	2	Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some quotations are improperly punctuated.	2	Not much personal style. Mostly uses formal language, but sometimes “talks to” the reader. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.	1	Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Quotations are not punctuated properly.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge. Uses informal language and “talks to” the reader.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

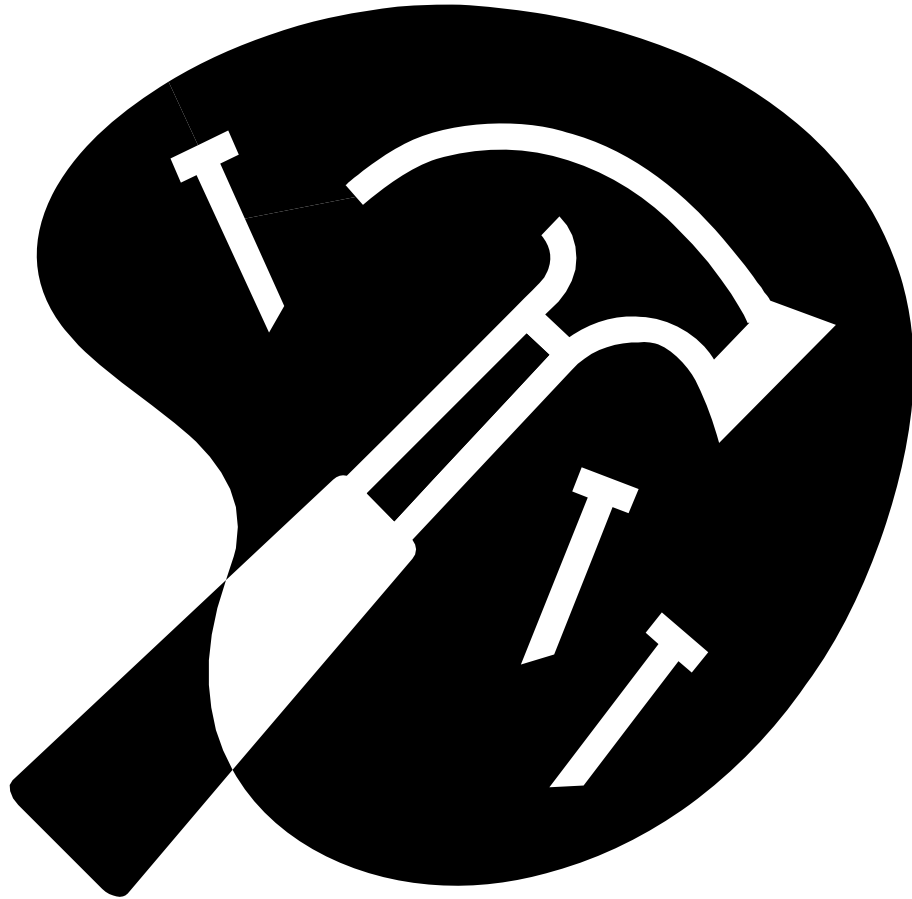
Persuasive Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. States a clear position or opinion. Position is supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; Author addresses possible reader concerns or arguments. Conclusion includes personal summary or understanding and inspires a strong reaction from reader.	4	Extremely well organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs, and conclusion.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines are followed.	4
Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience. States a position or opinion. Position is mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; fails to conclude with personal summary or understanding and generates a general reaction from the reader.	3	Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs, and conclusion.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines are followed.	3
Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Statement of position is weak. Position not well supported; Author spends little time addressing possible reader concerns or arguments. Conclusion includes only very general summary/observation and generates little or no reaction from the reader.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear introduction, supporting paragraphs, and conclusion.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines are followed.	2
Writing is somewhat, incoherent, and unfocused; no awareness of audience. Little or no statement of position. Position is unsupported. Author does not address possible reader concerns or arguments. No summary or understanding.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines are not followed.	1

Persuasive Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Sentences are used mostly correctly.	3	Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.	2	Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.	1	Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

SECTION 3



“How-To”

REVIEWING RUBRICS WITH STUDENTS

With some careful planning on the part of the teacher, these rubrics can help students to:

1. achieve writing standards
2. understand the vocabulary associated with good writing.

Six Plus One Traits: Sixth Grade Writing Standards, Pages 4-5

Start the year with an introduction to the traits of good writing. By reviewing only the “Advanced,” or Level 4 on the rubric with students, they can shoot for the stars. Even those students who currently are at the Below Basic or Basic Levels can improve when they know what the “ultimate” goals are for a writer.

The Levels 3, 2, and 1 are all derivatives of the Level 4 description on each rubric. For that reason, it is not necessary to give the students the complete rubrics with all traits and all levels.

The handout can be given out at the beginning of the school year, and students can continue to refer to it as they work on different traits and different writing units.

Student Trait Rubrics, Pages 6 - 12

Individual handouts for each writing trait are available in Section 1, “Student Rubrics.” Many teachers feel that on a given writing assignment, they only want their students to be focusing on one or two traits.

When working on a particular trait, the teacher can hand out the rubric for that trait and help students understand the differences between the “Advanced,” “Proficient,” “Basic” and “Below Basic.” If some student sample paragraphs or stories are available (with the names removed), the teacher can have students practice using the rubric by rating the writing sample on the 4-point scale and connecting specific passages of the text to specific phrases in the rubric.

Teacher Rubrics, Pages 14-25

These rubrics are meant for the teacher to use as an assessment tool.

Some teachers have found that by only using the teacher rubric students are overwhelmed with the format and information. However, as teachers read student work, they can easily circle or underline parts of the rubric in each column that apply to that particular student paper. Thus, detailed feedback for each student is provided on one sheet of paper. This can easily become part of a portfolio or student writing file.

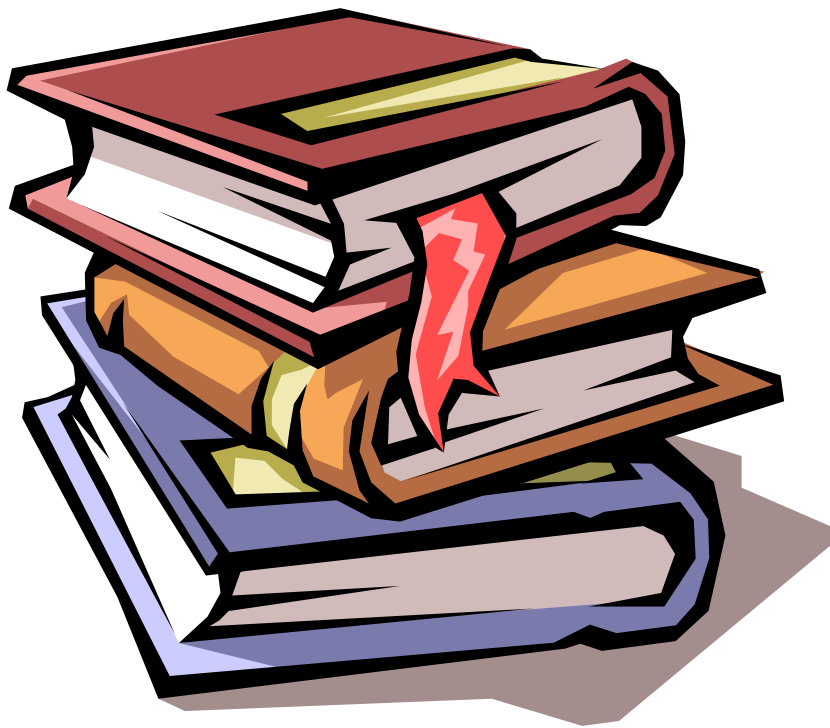
Please note that it is not necessary to assess all traits for each student on each assignment! For example, let's say the first big writing assignment is to have students write a short personal story about themselves. The teacher may only have taught the students about expressing their ideas clearly (Ideas and Content) and choosing specific vocabulary words (Word Choice). In this situation, only those two columns on the teacher rubric are necessary for assessment.

If a point system for grading is used, a specific number of points for each trait can be assigned at the top of each column. Please remember, though, that Level 3 should be Proficient; making a Level 3 performance (Proficient) worth 3 points out of 4 would not be a good idea, because that would be a 75%!

These rubrics are meant to make a teacher's life easier – not more confusing!



SECTION 4



APPENDIX

DEFINITIONS

GENRES

NARRATIVE

- Tells a story and includes a beginning, middle, and end.
- Includes setting, character, plot, conflict, climax, and resolution.

EXPOSITORY

- Provides information and includes introduction, body, and conclusion paragraphs.
- Includes topic sentences, reasons/details/facts, transitions, elaboration, and a closing/clincher.

RESEARCH REPORT

- Expresses topic as a specific (focused) question that is covered thoroughly.
- Includes support from facts, details, examples, and explanations from multiple sources.
- Includes a bibliography.

RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

- Responses exhibit careful reading, understanding, and insight.
- Goes beyond a summary of the literature to expressing a truth about it.

PERSUASIVE

- States a clear position or opinion on a meaningful topic.
- Supports the position with organized and relevant evidence.
- Anticipates and addresses reader concerns and potential counterarguments.

DEFINITIONS

TRAITS

IDEAS & CONTENT

- Focus of paper is clear and well-supported

ORGANIZATION

- Structure allows for a clear and effective understanding of the topic

VOICE

- Ability of the writer to speak to the reader in a unique and appropriate way

SENTENCE FLUENCY

- Variety of sentence length and structures

WORD CHOICE

- Using precise, colorful language appropriate to the audience

CONVENTIONS

- Proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

PRESENTATION

- Following specific guidelines in a neat and clean manner

DEFINITIONS

GENERAL TERMINOLOGY

AWARENESS OF AUDIENCE

- Author needs to understand who the reader will be, such as teacher, student, parent, etc., and modify the writing to fit the purpose.

DEAD WORDS

- Simple words that can easily be replaced with more specific, descriptive choices. Some examples of dead words are good, nice, like, pretty.

LITERARY DEVICES

- Ways to enhance the writing, such as similes, metaphors, hyperbole, personification, etc.

PRIMARY SOURCES

- A first-hand account or document, such as an interview or a diary.

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Any information based on someone else's account, such as a newspaper article or book.

SOPHISTICATION

- To bring to a deeper and more complex level than the average student.